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LAND RESOURCES: DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

Revised text submitted by the Chairman

MANAGING FRAGILE ECOSYSTEMS: COMBATING DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

(Section II, chapter 4 of Agenda 21)

INTRODUCTION

1. Fragile ecosystems are important ecosystems, with unique features and resources. Fragile ecosystems include deserts, semi-arid lands, mountains, wetlands, small islands and certain coastal areas. Most of these ecosystems are regional in scope, as they transcend national boundaries. This chapter addresses land resource issues in deserts, as well as arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas. Sustainable mountain development is addressed in section II, chapter 5 of Agenda 21. Small islands and coastal areas are discussed in section II, chapter 9.

2. Desertification is land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variations and human activities. Desertification affects about one sixth of the world's population, 70 per cent of all drylands, amounting to 3.6 billion hectares, and one quarter of the total land area of the world. The most obvious impact of desertification, in addition to widespread poverty, is the degradation of 3.3 billion hectares of the total area of rangeland, constituting 73 per cent of the rangeland with a low potential for human and animal carrying capacity; decline in soil fertility and soil structure on about 47 per cent of the

dryland areas constituting marginal rainfed cropland; and the degradation of irrigated cropland, amounting to 30 per cent of the dryland areas with a high population density and agricultural potential.

3. The priority in combating desertification should be the implementation of preventive measures for lands that are not yet degraded, or which are only slightly degraded. However, the severely degraded areas should not be neglected. In combating desertification and drought, the participation of local communities, rural organizations, national Governments, non-governmental organizations and international and regional organizations is essential.

4. The discussion on document A/CONF.151/PC/WG.I/L.29 revealed the national, regional and global nature of the desertification problem and the important developmental and environmental implications that require investigation and immediate action. There was broad agreement on the content of that document and the proposed programme areas for Agenda 21 contained in the annex to the Preparatory Committee decison 3/16. In that decision the Preparatory Committee also requested a further elaboration of the proposed programme areas and action for consideration at its fourth session.

5. The following programme areas are included in this chapter:

A. Strengthening the knowledge base and developing information and monitoring systems for regions prone to desertification and drought, including the economic and social aspects of these ecosystems;

B. Combating land degradation through, inter alia, intensified soil conservation, afforestation and reforestation activities;

C. Developing and strengthening integrated development programmes for the eradication of poverty and promotion of alternative livelihood systems in areas prone to desertification;

D. Developing comprehensive anti-desertification programmes and integrating them into national development plans and national environmental planning;

E. Developing comprehensive drought preparedness and drought-relief schemes, including self-help arrangements, for drought-prone areas and designing programmes to cope with environmental refugees;

F. Encouraging and promoting popular participation and environmental education, focusing on desertification control and management of the effects of drought.

PROGRAMME AREAS

A. Strengthening the knowledge base and developing information and monitoring systems for regions prone to desertification and drought, including the economic and social aspects of these ecosystems

Basis for action

6. The global assessments of the status and rate of desertification conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1977, 1984 and 1991 have revealed insufficient basic knowledge of desertification processes. Adequate worldwide monitoring systems are helpful for the development and implementation of effective anti-desertification programmes. The capacity of existing international, regional and national institutions, particularly in developing countries, to generate and exchange relevant information is limited. An integrated and coordinated information and monitoring system based on appropriate technology and embracing global, regional, national and local levels is essential for understanding the dynamics of desertification and drought processes. It is also important for developing adequate measures to deal with desertificatien and drought and improving socio-economic conditions.

Objectives

7. The objectives of this programme area are:

(a) To promote establishment and/or strengthening of national environmental information coordination centres that will act as focal points within Governments for sectoral ministries and provide the necessary standardization and back-up services; ensuring also that national environmental information systems on desertification and drought are linked together through a network at subregional, regional and interregional levels;

(b) To strengthen regional and global monitoring networks linked to the development of national monitoring systems for the observation of land degradation and desertification caused both by climate fluctuations and by human impact, and identifying priority areas for action;

(c) To establish a permanent system at both national and international levels for monitoring desertification/land degradation with the aim of improving living conditions in the affected areas.

Activities

(a) Management-related activities

8. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Establish and/or strengthen environmental information systems at the national level;

(b) Strengthen national and provincial/local assessment and ensure cooperation/networking between existing environmental information and monitoring systems, such as Earthwatch and the Sahara and Sahel Observatory;

(c) Strengthen the capacity of national institutions to analyse environmental data so that ecological change can be monitored and environmental information obtained on a continuing basis at the national level.

(b) Data and information

9. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Review and study the means for measuring the ecological, economic and social consequences of desertification and land degradation and introduce the results of these studies internationally into desertification and land degradation assessment practices;

(b) Review and study the interactions between the socio-economic impacts of climate, drought and desertification and utilize the results of these studies to secure concrete action.

10. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Support the integrated data collection and research work of programmes related to desertification and drought problems;

(b) Support national, regional and global programmes for integrated data collection and research networks carrying out assessment of soil and land degradation;

(c) Strengthen national and regional meteorological and hydrological networks and monitoring systems to ensure adequate collection of basic information and communication among national, regional and international centres.

(c) International and regional cooperation and coordination

11. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Strengthen regional programmes and international cooperation, such as the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD), the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) and other regional organizations, as well as such organizations as the Sahara and Sahel Observatory;

(b) Establish and/or develop a comprehensive desertification, land degradation and human condition database component that incorporates both physical and socio-economic parameters. This should be based on existing and, where necessary, additional facilities, such as those of Earthwatch and other information systems of international, regional and national institutions strengthened for this purpose;

(c) Determine benchmarks and define indicators of progress that facilitate the work of local and regional organizations in monitoring and tracking progress in the fight for anti-desertification. Particular attention should be paid to indicators of local participation.

Means of implementation

(a) Financing and cost-evaluation

12. [The total financing required to implement this programme area is about $350 million a year, while the average annual financing required from international sources is about $175 million. From this international figure, the average annual costs related to accelerated development would be about $165 million and the costs for strengthening the capacity of international institutions would be about $10 million a year.]

(b) Scientific and technological means

13. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations working on the issue of desertification and drought, should:

(a) Undertake and update existing inventories of natural resources, such as energy, water, soil, minerals, plant and animal access to food, as well as other resources, such as housing, employment, health, education and demographic distribution in time and space;

(b) Develop integrated information systems for environmental monitoring, accounting and impact assessment;

(c) International bodies should cooperate with national Governments to facilitate the acquisition and development of appropriate technology for monitoring and combating drought and desertification.

(c) Human resource development

14. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations working on the issue of desertification and drought, should develop the technical and professional skills of people engaged in monitoring and assessing the issue of desertification and drought.

(d) Capacity-building

15. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations working on the issue of desertification and drought, should:

(a) Strengthen national and local institutions by providing adequate staff equipment and finance for monitoring and assessing desertification;

(b) Promote the involvement of the local population, particularly women and youth, in the collection and utilization of environmental information through education and awareness-building.

B. Combating land degradation through, inter alia, intensified soil conservation, afforestation and reforestation activities

Basis for action

16. Desertification affects about 3.6 billion hectares, which is about 70 per cent of the total area of the world's drylands or nearly one quarter of the global land area. Action should be launched to protect and take preventive measures in areas which are not yet affected or are only slightly affected by desertification. This includes more than 1.2 billion hectares of rangeland (about 27 per cent of the total area of rangeland), 240 million hectares of rainfed cropland (about 53 per cent of the total area of rainfed cropland) and 100 million hectares of irrigated cropland (about 70 per cent of the total irrigated land). Measures should be taken to implement corrective measures to sustain the productivity of moderately desertified drylands. This includes about 1.25 billion hectares of rangeland (about 28 per cent of the total area of rangeland), 180 million hectares of rainfed cropland (about 40 per cent of the total area of rainfed cropland) and 35 million hectares of irrigated cropland (about 23 per cent of the total irrigated area). Another important measure would consist of rehabilitation or protection for natural recovery of severely or very severely desertified drylands. These include over 2 billion hectares of rangeland, 33 million hectares of rainfed cropland and 9 million hectares of irrigated cropland.

17. An increasing vegetation cover would promote and stabilize the hydrological balance in the dryland areas and maintain land quality and land productivity. Prevention of not yet degraded land and application of corrective measures and rehabilitation of moderate and severely degraded drylands, including areas affected by sand dune movements, through the introduction of environmentally sound, socially acceptable, fair and economically feasible land use systems. This will enhance the land carrying capacity and maintenance of biotic resources in fragile ecosystems.

Objectives

18. The objectives of this programme area are:

(a) As regards areas not yet affected or only slightly affected by desertification, to ensure appropriate management of existing natural formations (including forests) for the conservation of biodiversity, watershed protection, sustainability of their production and agricultural development, and other purposes, with the full participation of indigenous people;

(b) To rehabilitate moderately to severely desertified drylands for productive utilization and sustain their productivity for agropastoral/agroforestry development through, inter alia, soil and water conservation;

(c) To increase the vegetation cover and support management of biotic resources in regions affected or prone to desertification and drought, notably through such activities as afforestation/reforestation, agroforestry, community forestry and vegetation retention schemes;

(d) To improve management of forest resources, including woodfuel, and to reduce woodfuel consumption through more efficient utilization, conservation and the enhancement, development and use of other sources of energy, including alternative sources of energy.

Activities

(a) Management-related activities

19. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Implement urgent direct preventive measures in drylands that are vulnerable but not yet affected, or only slightly desertified drylands, by introducing (i) improved land-use policies and practices for more sustainable land productivity; (ii) appropriate, environmentally sound and economically feasible agricultural and pastoral technologies; and (iii) improved management of soil and water resources;

(b) Carry out accelerated afforestation and reforestation programmes, using drought-resistant, fast-growing species, in particular native ones, including legumes and other species, combined with community-based agroforestry schemes. In this regard, creation of large-scale reforestation and afforestation schemes, particularly through the establishment of green belts, should be considered, bearing in mind that such measures could increase CO_2 sinks;

(c) Implement urgent direct corrective measures in moderately to severely desertified drylands, in addition to the measures listed in paragraph 19 (a) above, with a view to restoring and sustaining their productivity;

(d) Promote improved land/water/crop-management systems, making it possible to combat salinization in existing irrigated croplands; and to stabilize rainfed croplands and introduce improved soil/crop-management systems into land-use practice;

(e) Promote participatory management of natural resources, including rangeland, to meet both the needs of rural populations and conservation purposes, based on innovative or adapted indigenous technologies;

(f) Promote in situ protection and conservation of special ecological areas through legislation and other means for the purpose of combating desertification while ensuring the protection of biodiversity;

(g) Promote and encourage investment in forestry development in drylands through various incentives, including legislative measures;

(h) Promote the development and use of other sources of energy, including alternative sources of energy and improved stoves to lessen pressure on ligneous resources.

(b) Data and information

20. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Develop land-use models based on local practices for the improvement of local practices, with a focus on preventing land degradation. The models should give a better understanding of the variety of natural and human-induced factors that may contribute to desertification. Models should incorporate the interaction of both new and traditional practices to prevent land degradation and reflect the resilience of the whole ecological and social system;

(b) Develop, test and introduce, with due regard to environmental security considerations, drought resistant, fast-growing and productive plant species appropriate to the environment of the regions concerned.

(c) International and regional cooperation and coordination

21. The appropriate United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and bilateral agencies should:

(a) Coordinate their roles in combating land degradation and promoting reforestation, agroforestry and land-management systems in affected countries;

(b) Support regional and subregional activities in technology development and dissemination, training and programme implementation to arrest dryland degradation.

22. The national Governments concerned, the appropriate United Nations agencies and bilateral agencies should strengthen the coordinating role in dryland degradation of subregional intergovernmental organizations set up to cover these activities, such as CILSS, IGADD, SADCC and the Arab Maghreb Union.

Means of implementation

(a) Financing and cost-evaluation

23. [The total financing required to implement this programme area in developing countries is about $6 billion a year, while the average annual financing required from international sources is about $3 billion. From this international figure, costs related to accelerated development would be about $2.6 billion a year, the requirements for global environmental issues would be about $370 million a year, and the amount for strengthening the capacity of international institutions would be about $30 million a year.]

(b) Scientific and technological means

24. Governments at the appropriate level and local communities, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Integrate indigenous knowledge related to forests, forest lands, rangeland and natural vegetation into research activities on desertification and drought;

(b) Promote integrated research programmes on the protection, restoration and conservation of water and land resources and land-use management based on traditional approaches, where feasible.

(c) Human resource development

25. Governments at the appropriate level and local communities, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Establish mechanisms to ensure that land users, particularly women, are the main actors in implementing improved land use, including agroforestry systems, in combating land degradation;

(b) Promote efficient extension-service facilities in areas prone to desertification and drought, particularly for training farmers and pastoralists in the improved management of land and water resources in drylands.

(d) Capacity-building

26. Governments at the appropriate level and local communities, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Develop and adopt, through appropriate national legislation, and introduce institutionally, new and environmentally sound development-oriented land-use policies;

(b) Support community-based people's organizations, especially farmers and pastoralists.

C. Developing and strengthening integrated development programmes for the eradication of poverty and promotion of alternative livelihood systems in areas prone to desertification

Basis for action

27. In areas prone to desertification and drought, current livelihood and resource-use systems are not able to maintain living standards. In most of the arid and semi-arid areas, the traditional livelihood systems based on agropastoral systems are often inadequate and unsustainable, particularly in view of the effects of drought and increasing demographic pressure. Poverty is a major factor in accelerating the rate of degradation and desertification. Action is therefore needed to rehabilitate and improve the agropastoral systems for sustainable management of rangelands, as well as alternative livelihood systems.

Objectives

28. The objectives of this programme area are:

(a) To create the capacity of village communities and pastoral groups to take charge of their development and the management of their land resources on a socially equitable and ecologically sound basis;

(b) To improve production systems in order to achieve greater productivity within approved programmes for conservation of national resources and in the framework of an integrated approach to rural development;

(c) To provide opportunities for alternative livelihoods as a basis for reducing pressure on land resources while at the same time providing additional sources of income, particularly for rural populations, thereby improving their standard of living.

Activities

(a) Management-related activities

29. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Adopt policies at the national level regarding a decentralized approach to land-resource management, delegating responsibility to rural organizations;

(b) Create or strengthen rural organizations in charge of village and pastoral land management;

(c) Establish and develop local, national and intersectoral mechanisms to handle environmental and developmental consequences of land tenure expressed in terms of land use and land ownership. Particular attention should be given to protecting the property rights of women and pastoral and nomadic groups living in rural areas;

(d) Create or strengthen village associations focused on economic activities of common pastoral interest (market gardening, transformation of agricultural products, livestock, herding, etc.);

(e) Promote rural credit and mobilization of rural savings through the establishment of rural banking systems;

(f) Develop infrastructure, as well as local production and marketing capacity, by involving the local people to promote alternative livelihood systems and alleviate poverty;

(g) Establish a revolving fund for credit to rural entrepreneurs and local groups to facilitate the establishment of cottage industries/business ventures and credit for input to agropastoral activities.

(b) Data and information

30. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Conduct socio-economic baseline studies in order to have a good understanding of the situation in the programme area regarding, particularly, resource and land tenure issues, traditional land-management practices and characteristics of production systems;

(b) Conduct inventory of natural resources (soil, water and vegetation) and their state of degradation, based primarily on the knowledge of the local population (e.g., rapid rural appraisal);

(c) Disseminate information on technical packages adapted to the social, economic and ecological conditions of each;

(d) Promote exchange and sharing of information concerning the development of alternative livelihoods with other agro-ecological regions.

(c) International and regional cooperation and coordination

31. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Promote cooperation and exchange of information among the arid and semi-arid land research institutions concerning techniques and technologies to improve land and labour productivity, as well as viable production systems;

(b) Coordinate and harmonize the implementation of programmes and projects funded by the international organization communities and non-governmental organizations that are directed towards the alleviation of poverty and promotion of an alternative livelihood system.

Means of implementation

(a) Financing and cost-evaluation

32. [The total financing required for these programme areas is about $3 billion a year, while the average annual financing required from international sources is about $1.5 billion].

(b) Scientific and technological means

33. Governments, at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Undertake applied research in land-use with the support of local research institutions;

(b) Facilitate regular national, regional and interregional communication on and exchange of information and experience between extension officers and researchers;

(c) Support and encourage the introduction and use of technologies for the generation of alternative sources of incomes.

(c) Human resource development

34. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Train members of rural organizations in management skills and train agropastoralists in such special techniques as soil and water conservation, water harvesting, agroforestry and small-scale irrigation;

(b) Train extension agents and officers in the participatory approach to integrated land management

(d) Capacity-building

35. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should establish and maintain mechanisms to ensure the integration into sectoral and national development plans and programmes of strategies for poverty alleviation among the inhabitants of lands prone to desertification.

D. Developing comprehensive anti-desertification programmes and integrating them into national developing plans and national environmental planning

Basis for action

36. In a number of developing countries affected by desertification, the natural resource base is the main resource upon which the development process must rely. The social systems interacting with land resources make the problem much more complex, requiring an integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources. Action plans to combat desertification and drought should include management aspects of the environment and development, thus conforming with the approach of integrating national development plans and national environmental action plans.

Objectives

37. The objectives of this programme area are:

(a) To strengthen national institutional capabilities to develop appropriate anti-desertification programmes and to integrate them into national development planning;

(b) To develop and integrate strategic planning frameworks for the development, protection and management of natural resources in dryland areas into national development plans, including national plans to combat desertification, and environmental action plans in countries most prone to desertification;

(c) To initiate a long-term process for implementing and monitoring strategies related to natural resources management;

(d) To strengthen regional and international cooperation for combating desertification [through, inter alia, the adoption of legal and other instruments].

Activities

(a) Management-related activities

38. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Establish or strengthen, national and local anti-desertification authorities within government and local executive bodies, as well as local committees/associations of land-users, in all rural communities affected, with a view to organizing working cooperation between all actors concerned, from the grass-roots level (farmers and pastoralists) to the higher levels of government;

(b) Develop national plans of action to combat desertification and as appropriate, make them integral parts of national development plans and national environmental action plans;

(c) Implement policies directed towards improving land use, managing common lands appropriately, providing incentives to small farmers and pastoralists, involving women and encouraging private investment in the development of drylands;

(d) Ensure coordination among ministries and institutions working on anti-desertification programmes at national and local levels.

(b) Data and information

39. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should promote information exchange and cooperation with respect to national planning and programming among affected countries, inter alia, through networking.

(c) International and regional cooperation and coordination

40. The relevant international organizations, multilateral financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and bilateral agencies should strengthen their cooperation in assisting with the preparation of desertification control programmes and their integration into national planning strategies, with the establishment of national coordinating and monitoring mechanisms and with the regional and global networking of these plans and mechanisms.

41. [Governments, intergovernmental organizations, relevant non-governmental organizations, and the scientific community should improve and strengthen international cooperation and solidarity in the fight against desertification through the preparation and adoption of an international convention to combat desertification, particularly in Africa. This convention should contain concrete and specific commitments from the participating parties (both the countries affected by desertification and other countries parties to the convention) and should take into account the needs of Governments as well as of populations affected by desertification. It is proposed that the servicing of the mechanism that will be set up for the preparation of that convention could be entrusted to the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, thereby benefiting from the experience gained by that organization in desertification control activities.]

Means of implementation

(a) Financing and cost-evaluation

42. [The total financing required to implement this programme area is about $180 million a year, while the average annual financing required from international sources is about $90 million. Of this latter figure, costs related to accelerated development would amount to about $80 million a year, and costs for strengthening the capacity of international institutions would be about $10 million a year.]

(b) Scientific and technological means

43. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Develop and introduce appropriate improved sustainable agricultural and pastoral technologies that are socially and environmentally acceptable and economically feasible;

(b) Undertake applied study on the integration of environmental and developmental activities into national development plans.

(c) Human resource development

44. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should undertake nation-wide major anti-desertification awareness/training campaigns within countries affected through existing national mass media facilities, educational networks and newly created or strengthened extension services. This should ensure people's access to knowledge of desertification and drought and to national plans of action to combat desertification.

(d) Capacity-building

45. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should establish and maintain mechanisms to ensure coordination of sectoral ministries and institutions, including local-level institutions and appropriate non-governmental organizations, in integrating anti-desertification programmes into national development plans and national environmental action plans.

E. Developing comprehensive drought preparedness and drought-relief schemes, including self-help arrangements, for drought-prone areas and designing programmes to cope with environmental refugees

Basis for action

46. Drought, in differing degrees of frequency and severity, is a recurring phenomenon throughout much of the developing world, especially Africa. Apart from the human toll - an estimated 3 million people died in the mid-1980s because of drought in sub-Saharan Africa - the economic costs of drought-related disasters are also high in terms of lost production, misused inputs and diversion of development resources.

47. Early-warning systems to forecast drought will make possible the implementation of drought-preparedness schemes. Integrated packages at the farm and watershed level, such as alternative cropping strategies, soil and water conservation and promotion of water harvesting techniques, could enhance the capacity of land to cope with drought and provide basic necessities, thereby minimizing the number of environmental refugees and the need for emergency drought relief. At the same time, contingency arrangements for relief are needed for periods of acute scarcity.

Objectives

48. The objectives of this programme area are:

(a) To develop national strategies for drought preparedness in both the short and long term, aimed at reducing the vulnerability of production systems to drought;

(b) To strengthen the flow of early-warning information to decision makers and land users to enable nations to implement strategies for drought intervention;

(c) To develop and integrate drought-relief schemes and means of coping with environmental refugees into national and regional development planning.

Activities

(a) Management-related activities

49. In drought-prone areas, Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Design strategies to deal with national food deficiencies in periods of production shortfall. These strategies should deal with issues of storage and stocks, imports, port facilities, food storage, transport and distribution;

(b) Improve national and regional capacity for agrometeorology and contingency crop planning. Agrometeorology links the frequency, content and regional coverage of weather forecasts with the requirements of crop planning and agricultural extension;

(c) Prepare rural projects for providing short-term rural employment to drought-affected households. The loss of income and entitlement to food is a common source of distress in times of drought. Rural works help to generate the income required to buy food for poor households;

(d) Establish contingency arrangements, where necessary, for food and fodder distribution and water supply;

(e) Establish budgetary mechanisms for providing, at short notice, resources for drought relief;

(f) Establish safety nets for the most vulnerable households.

(b) Data and information

50. Governments of affected countries, at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Implement research on seasonal forecasts to improve contingency planning and relief operations and allow preventive measures to be taken at the farm level, such as the selection of appropriate varieties and farming practices, in times of drought;

(b) Support applied research on ways of reducing water loss from soils, on ways of increasing the water absorption capacities of soils and on water harvesting techniques in drought-prone areas;

(c) Strengthen national early-warning systems, with particular emphasis on the area of risk-mapping, remote-sensing, agrometeorological modelling, integrated multidisciplinary crop-forecasting techniques and computerized food supply/demand analysis.

(c) International and regional cooperation and coordination

51. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Establish a system of stand-by capacities in terms of foodstock, logistical support, personnel and finance for a speedy international response to drought-related emergencies;

(b) Support programmes of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) on agrohydrology and agrometeorology, the Programme of the Regional Training Centre for Agrometeorology and Operational Hydrology and their Applications (AGRHYMET), drought-monitoring centres and the African Centre of

Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), as well as the efforts of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD);

(c) Support FAO programmes and other programmes for the development of national early-warning systems and food security assistance schemes;

(d) Strengthen and expand the scope of existing regional programmes and the activities of appropriate United Nations organs and organizations, such as the World Food Programme (WFP), the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) and the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office as well as of non-governmental organizations, aimed at mitigating the effects of drought and emergencies.

Means of implementation

(a) Financing and cost-evaluation

52. [This programme area requires two sets of cost-evaluations. The first set deals with developing drought-preparedness and drought-relief schemes, the total cost of which is about $200 million a year, the average annual financing required from international sources amounting to about $100 million. From this international figure, costs related to accelerated development would be about $90 million a year and the amount for strengthening the capacity of international institutions would be about $10 million a year. The second set deals with the cost required to cope with environmental refugees displaced from their homes by emergencies such as drought, among other natural disasters. The international financing required to cope with such emergencies is about $1 billion a year.]

(b) Scientific and technological means

53. Governments at the appropriate level and drought-prone communities, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Use traditional mechanisms to cope with hunger as a means of channelling relief and development assistance;

(b) Strengthen and develop national, regional and local interdisciplinary research and training capabilities for drought-prevention strategies.

(c) Human resource development

54. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Promote the training of decision makers and land users in the effective utilization of information from early-warning systems;

(b) Strengthen research and national training capabilities to assess the impact of drought and to develop methodologies to forecast drought.

(d) Capacity-building

55. Governments, at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Improve and maintain mechanisms with adequate staff, equipment and finances for monitoring drought parameters to take preventive measures at regional, national and local levels;

(b) Establish interministerial linkages and coordinating units for drought monitoring, impact assessment and management of drought-relief schemes.

F. Encouraging and promoting popular participation and environmental education, focusing on desertification control and management of the effects of drought

Basis for action

56. The experience to date on the successes and failures of programmes and projects points to the need for popular support to sustain activities related to desertification and drought control. But it is necessary to go beyond the theoretical ideal of popular participation and to focus on obtaining actual active popular involvement, rooted in the concept of partnership. This implies the sharing of responsibilities and the mutual involvement of all parties. In this context, this programme area should be considered an essential supporting component of all desertification-control and drought-related activities.

Objectives

57. The objectives of this programme area are:

(a) To develop and increase public awareness and knowledge concerning desertification and drought, including the integration of environmental education in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools;

(b) To establish and promote true partnership between government authorities, at both the national and local levels, other executing agencies, non-governmental organizations and land users stricken by drought and desertification, giving land users a responsible role in the planning and execution processes in order to benefit fully from development projects;

(c) To ensure that the partners understand one another's needs, objectives and points of view by providing a variety of means such as training, public awareness and open dialogue;

(d) To support local communities in their own efforts in combating desertification, and to draw on the knowledge and experience of the populations concerned, ensuring the full participation of women and indigenous populations.

Activities

(a) Management-related activities

58. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Adopt policies and establish administrative structures for more decentralized decision-making and implementation;

(b) Establish and utilize mechanisms for the consultation and involvement of land users and for enhancing capability at the grass-roots level to identify and/or contribute to the identification and planning of action;

(c) Define specific programme/project objectives in cooperation with local communities; design local management plans to include such measures of progress, thereby providing a means of altering project design or changing management practices, as appropriate;

(d) Introduce legislative, institutional/organizational and financial measures to secure user involvement and access to land resources;

(e) Establish and/or expand favourable conditions for the provision of services, such as credit facilities and marketing outlets for rural populations;

(f) Develop training programmes to increase the level of education and participation of people, particularly women and indigenous groups, through, inter alia, literacy and the development of technical skills;

(g) Create rural banking systems to facilitate access to credit for rural populations, particularly women and indigenous groups, and to promote rural savings;

(h) Adopt appropriate policies to stimulate private and public investment.

(b) Data and information

59. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Review, develop and disseminate gender-disaggregated information, skills and know-how at all levels on ways of organizing and promoting popular participation;

(b) Accelerate the development of technological know-how, focusing on appropriate and intermediate technology;

(c) Disseminate knowledge about applied research results on soil and water issues, appropriate species, agricultural techniques and technological know-how.

(c) International and regional cooperation and coordination

60. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Develop programmes of support to regional organizations such as CILSS, IGADD, the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) and the Arab Maghreb Union and other intergovernmental organizations in Africa and other parts of the world, to strengthen outreach programmes and increase the participation of non-governmental organizations together with rural populations;

(b) Develop mechanisms for facilitating cooperation in technology and promote such cooperation as an element of all external assistance and activities related to technical assistance projects in the public or private sector;

(c) Promote collaboration among different actors in environment and development programmes;

(d) Encourage the emergence of representative organizational structures to foster and sustain interorganizational cooperation.

Means of implementation

(a) Financing and cost-evaluation

61. [The total financing required for this programme area is about $2.5 billion a year, while the average annual financing required from international sources is about $1 billion.]

(b) Scientific and technological means

62. Governments, at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should promote the development of indigenous know-how and technology transfer.

(c) Human resource development

63. Governments, at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should:

(a) Support and/or strengthen institutions involved in public education, including the local media, schools and community groups;

(b) Increase the level of public education.

(d) Capacity-building

64. Governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should promote members of local rural organizations and train and appoint more extension officers working at the local level.